

THE HISTORY

OF

ANDREW W. DUNN.

To the Law and to the Testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."—ISAIAH viii, 20

PHILADELPHIA:
1827.



THE HISTORY OF ANDREW DUNN.

“To the Law and to the Testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.”—ISAIAH viii, 20.

CHAPTER I.

Andrew's doubts, and first conversation with Father Dominick; his getting of a Testament, and the use he made of it.

ANDREW DUNN was educated a Roman Catholic, and continued till he was about forty years of age, like his neighbours, taking for granted that every thing his clergy told him was true. He was a shrewd sensible man; but his sagacity till this time, had been exercised merely in the affairs of this world. About the age of forty he began to consider the importance of religion, and his own ignorance upon the subject, and he determined to inquire about a matter upon which the salvation of his soul depended. Accordingly, he went to Father Dominick, the priest of his parish, and told him that he wished to have a little conversation with him. “Well, Andrew,” said he, “what have you to say to me?” “Why, please your reverence, I have been thinking for some time back, that, though I can strike a bargain well enough with a neighbour, I am nearly as ignorant about religion as a horse or a cow; and this I do not think becoming in a christian. Will your reverence be so kind as to put me in the way of getting some knowledge in this matter?” “Why,” answered he, “Andrew, I never missed you at confession, nor at mass, and you are a very honest fellow; what more do you want than this?” “Why, then, sir, to tell you the truth, if any one was to ask me, why I am a member of the Catholic Church, I could not tell him, unless I was to say, that my father was so before me; and this, with

submission, I think a very foolish reason.” “But, don’t you know, Andrew,” replied Father Dominick, “that you belong to the *Holy Mother Church*, and that there is no other true church, and that all who do not belong to her communion are *heretics*, and will certainly be damned?” “I have often,” said Andrew, “heard your reverence say as much in the chapel; but, with submission, may I make bold to ask your reverence, how you know all this?” “Andrew, you are the first of my flock, who ever dared to ask me such a question, and I do not understand such liberties! However, your question is easily answered: I know it, because the Church says so.”

Andrew was dissatisfied with his answer; and ventured to say that he had heard people wiser than himself question whether a man was a sufficient evidence in his own cause; and begged leave to ask, how it could be known that the Church spoke truth in this case. “Have a care,” replied Father Dominick, with some warmth, “what you are about. Do you know that to suspect the Church of error or falsehood is little short of blasphemy against the Holy Ghost?” Andrew was a little dismayed, at first, by the sound of these words; but recovering himself, he said, “May I make so bold as to ask your reverence, How came you to be so sure that the Church can make no mistake in these matters? For your reverence knows that it is but reasonable that a man should be a little inquisitive where he may gain or lose so much.” With an air of triumph, Father Dominick answered, “If you will ask questions, know then that Jesus Christ has promised to be with his Church to the end of the world, and this makes her infallible, that is, incapable of error.” “This, indeed, is something to the point,” cried Andrew; “and if your reverence will make this matter plain to me, I shall be easy in my mind for ever after.” Father Dominick, glad to get rid of him on such easy terms, told him that the promise of Jesus Christ was to be found in the last chapter and last verse of the gospel by St. Matthew; and having the promise at his fingers’ ends, he repeated it over to Andrew *in Latin*. “All this,” cried Andrew, “may be very fine, and very good, for any thing I know to the contrary; but please your reverence, I do not understand one word you say.” “I know that very well,” replied Father Dominick; “we take care, for the benefit

of our flock, to reserve the power of explaining such passages to them, according to the true interpretation put upon them by the Church." "With submission," said Andrew, "may I beg an explanation of those fine and learned words?" "Why, Andrew," answered Father Dominick, "the meaning of them is this, Jesus Christ promises to be with every council that the Pope shall call together, to the end of the world; that such council, being the Church, shall be infallible, that is, shall not be liable to error; and that consequently, every one who shall dare to dispute its decrees, shall be punished, as a heretic, and that his soul shall be miserable to all eternity."* "Is it possible," cried Andrew, astonished at what he heard, "is all this contained in the short sentence your reverence repeated?" "Ay, and a great deal more," replied he, "if I had time to tell it to you; with this passage we are able to confound all the pretenders to religion in the world; it leaves them not a word to say for themselves." "I think your reverence said, that this passage was in the Gospel by St. Matthew; I know St. Matthew was a very great Saint, and I'm sure the Gospel is something good, but I would be glad to know what the Gospel by St. Matthew is?" "Why, Andrew, you are become very inquisitive all at once. If you go on at this rate, I shan't have done with your questions all the day. The Gospel by St. Matthew is that part of the New Testament which was penned by St. Matthew." "Do not be angry," said Andrew, "if I ask your reverence what the New Testament is?" "It is," answered he rather angrily, "that part of the word of God, which contains an account of the life and death of Jesus Christ, and of the doctrines which he and his apostles taught."† "Does it,

* This is the doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church, respecting their councils: for, whatever disputes they may have about the infallibility of the Pope *by himself*, no Roman Catholic questions the infallibility of the Pope and council *together*. Now let us hear what Gregory Nazianzen says of these *infallible* councils; (and take notice that this very Gregory has a place in the Calendar of Saints.) He says, "I never saw an assembly of bishops that had a good and happy conclusion. They always increased the distemper rather than cured it."

From this we may learn how wise it is in any man to trust in the decrees of councils.

† Perhaps some one may think Andrew's ignorance was singular. By no means! To the writer's knowledge, it is not uncommon to meet aged men, among the lower ranks of Roman Catholics in Ire-

indeed!" cried Andrew; "then I should take great delight in reading such a book; please your reverence, where is it to be had? I would willingly save a penny out of my wages every day, till I had got enough to buy it. But (recollecting himself,) I think your reverence said it was in a strange tongue? What a pity that some learned person does not turn it into English for the benefit of us poor ignorant people! If I thought I had any chance of learning the language in which it is written, I would give up some part of every day from my work, that I might be able to read the word of God." Father Dominick did not undeceive him, by telling him that there was a very good translation of the book which he might get for a shilling; but told him that he was a blockhead for his pains, and bid him go about his business, mind his work, and not trouble himself about matters too high for him.

Andrew thought it a little hard, that his priest should put him away so roughly; but being accustomed to obey, he took leave, reflecting, however, on the conversation which passed between him and Father Dominick.

Andrew was not able to get rid of the wish he felt to read the New Testament. He thought within himself, "How pleasant it must be to read of Jesus Christ, and how useful to know the doctrines which he taught, out of the very book in which they are to be found, and in the words in which he spoke them! I envy Father Dominick nothing but his learning." This thought never left him; and he would dream at night that he had got a Testament.

Andrew was a thresher. He had learned, when he was a boy, to read and write, and, being naturally possessed of a good memory, he was still able to read tolerably well. He used to work frequently at a 'Squire's house in the neighbourhood, and was taken notice of as a good workman. The 'Squire's Lady was very kind to the poor about her; and particularly in the two last hard seasons she employed herself with such diligence to procure food

land, who, upon being asked, cannot tell what the word of God is. They can go to confession, can bless themselves, call upon saints, and adore a crucifix; but have no more notion of what religion is, than the piece of wood they ignorantly reverence. "Wo to the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture, saith the Lord!" JER. xxiii. 1.

for them, that she was the means of saving the lives of many who would have actually starved for want of subsistence, or by bad provisions have contracted incurable distempers. But when she endeavoured to relieve their bodies, she remembered that they had souls to be saved or lost; she would, therefore, when she visited the sick, drop a word or two, to call their attention to their everlasting concerns. She began about this time to buy Testaments, to distribute among the poor of all descriptions in her neighbourhood; certain, that whatever good this might do, it would do no harm. Father Dominick himself was ashamed to make any objection to this charitable deed of hers; although, if the truth were known, he would as soon that she had kept gifts of *this kind* to herself. As Andrew was threshing one day, this good lady went in to inquire after the health of one of his children, who had been ill, and whom she had gone to visit. After some further conversation, she asked him, if he had got a Testament in his house. "No, Madam," answered he, "but I wish I had one, and was able to read and understand it." "Why," said she, "did you never learn to read?" "O yes! Madam; but I am not acquainted with any language but English." "Why," answered she, "the book I speak of is in English." His heart leaped with joy. "This," said he, "is the very thing I wanted! Pray, Madam, have you one to spare?" She went immediately into the house, and brought out a Testament, which she presented to Andrew, and made him very happy by the gift. He put the book in his pocket, till his work was over, and then walked smartly home, that he might have an opportunity, that very night, of reading part of it. As he was on his way, he was led to reflect on the value of the treasure he had about him. "This book," said he to himself, "contains the words of God. If I was in possession of a book that would teach me how to become rich, I should greatly prize it; but this book will teach me how to be rich for ever. Why have I been so long ignorant of this book? And why should Father Dominick wish to keep it from me? Come what will, I am determined, with the blessing of God, that I will read it." As he thus meditated, he reached home, and after he and his family had done supper, he retired to the little room where he slept, and taking out the Testament, he gazed upon it a

few moments, and said, "This is the book which God has caused to be written, to show poor sinners, like me, the way to heaven. As it is his book, I trust he will enable me to understand it; I will therefore beseech him to give me wisdom, that I may know its true meaning, and not go astray." So saying, he kneeled down, and prayed to the following effect: "O Lord, the God of heaven and earth! I am a poor, ignorant creature; enlighten my mind that I may, when I read thy blessed word, understand it aright, and know what thou wouldst have me to do, that my soul may be saved." That night he read a few chapters, with which he was much delighted, and continued the same practice, until he had finished the whole. He was particularly struck in his reading, not to find any thing like what he used to hear from Father Dominick; not a word of the pope, of the mass, of confession, penance, and absolution, of saints' merits, holy-days, eating of fish, praying with beads, &c. "What!" cries he, "have I been hearing of these things all my life, and been taught to consider them as every thing in religion, and that all my salvation, and the salvation of all that have lived and do now live upon the earth, depends upon them, and yet I cannot find one word about them in the Testament? Does Father Dominick know this?" However, though Andrew could find nothing of *this* kind in the Testament, he found in it things of much greater importance. He was particularly affected by such texts as the following: Jesus said, "They that are whole, need not a physician, but they that are sick." "Ay," says he, "I understand this: if we had not been sinners, we should not have needed a Saviour." Again: "I am not come," said Jesus, "to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." O how comfortable to know that though I am a sinner, he will cast out none that come to him. Again: "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "Yes," cried Andrew, in a transport of admiration, "this is love indeed! that God should send his Son upon such an errand." But, recollecting himself, "Alas!" cried he, "what reason have I to be delighted with this news? How do I know that I have any thing to do with it?" Such passages as the following used to wound him to the

very soul: "The wicked shall go into everlasting punishment." Matt. xxv. 46. "Know ye not, that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?" 1 Cor. vi. 9. "God will render unto every man according to his deeds. Tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil." Rom. ii. 6, 9. When he read such passages as these, at times, his heart would sink within him; for he well knew that he had been a sinner, and that God might justly punish him with everlasting destruction. "O wretched man that I am!" he would often cry, "who shall deliver me?" In this state of mind, sometimes elevated by hope, and at other times depressed by fear, he continued some weeks.

I may here mention, that Andrew had a family, consisting of a wife, a son, and two daughters; his son about eighteen, and his daughters, seventeen and sixteen. It was impossible that he could conceal entirely from them the feelings of his mind; and they would often ask him the cause of his concern. At first, he used to put them off with some evasive answer; but, upon their growing more inquisitive and importunate, he would say: "O my dear wife and children, there is much more in religion than any of us have been aware of. The Testament tells me I am a sinner, and this is what makes me uneasy." Andrew was much loved by his family, who at first thought that he was a little beside himself, and were greatly frightened; but, upon seeing that he appeared quite rational in every other respect, they endeavoured to comfort him, by saying, "That though, to be sure, he was a sinner, as who was not? yet he was as honest a man as any of his neighbours, had a good heart, and never missed his duties." "Poor comfort," cried Andrew; "poor medicine for a wounded conscience! If you have no better consolation for me than this, O spare me the pain of hearing what only inflicts a deeper wound! Can you tell me how I shall get rid of my sins?" "Ay, to be sure," cried his wife; "go, my dear, to Father Dominick, and confess to him, and he will give you absolution in the twinkling of an eye." "Give me absolution!" replied Andrew, heaving a sigh; "this might do in the days of my ignorance; but I require a different kind of absolution now. God only, my dear, can forgive sins; and Father Dominick has no more power to forgive sins than

you or I." His family was startled at the boldness of his assertion, and began to bless themselves, lest they should be polluted by what they thought downright blasphemy; "I repeat it," cried Andrew, "he has no more power to forgive sins, than you or I." His family had often heard him utter dreadful oaths, without any emotions of horror; they had heard him call for damnation upon his own soul, and upon the souls of others, a hundred times, and this without being, in the least, disturbed, but when they heard him question the authority of Father Dominick, and his right to forgive sins, they took the alarm, and they stopped their ears, that they might hear no more of such offensive language. In this manner poor Andrew, for a considerable time, had fightings without, and fears within.

One day he took up the Testament, and read in the 15th chapter of St. Luke. When he came to that part, where the poor prodigal says, "I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against Heaven and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son," he fell upon his knees, and, applying the passage to himself, he cried out earnestly for pardon, through Jesus Christ. Casting his eyes upon the book, he was struck with those words, "When his father saw him, he had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him;" and immediately recollecting another passage which he had read, "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin," his heart was melted by a view of the love of God, in sending his Son to save sinners; and casting himself as a sinner upon the free mercy of God through Christ, he found himself in possession of a kind of comfort such as he had never before experienced.

CHAPTER II.

Andrew's success in speaking to his family. His second interview with Father Dominick. Father Dominick's conduct.

ANDREW now began to speak more plainly to his family than before, and would tell them of the love of Christ in giving himself to redeem perishing sinners. He would likewise exhort them not to neglect so great salvation;

and, with tears in his eyes, he would urge upon them the necessity of repentance, of a change of heart, and a new life. For some time he seemed to them all, except his youngest daughter, as a person beside himself. *She*, from the beginning, heard his words with much attention; and in a short time came to him, and, with a countenance expressive of the feelings of her mind, confessed, "that she had been deeply affected by the things he had spoken; that she could never banish the thought of them from her mind day or night; that she was, for some time, ashamed to confess this, and had, therefore, kept it a secret; but that her mind was in such a state of uneasiness, that she now came to him for advice and consolation." Poor Andrew was greatly delighted by what he heard; he told her the importance of not trifling with such serious thoughts, endeavoured to set before her the love of Christ to the chief of sinners, and bid her comply with his invitation to come unto him without delay; that she needed nothing to recommend her to Christ but her wants, which he would freely supply. After some time, Andrew had the satisfaction of seeing his wife and son convinced, by the grace of God, of the truth, and humbly seeking salvation at the foot of the cross; so that there remained now of his family only his eldest daughter, who was not truly pious. *She* continued deaf to all his remonstrances and exhortations, and her obstinacy was a severe trial to Andrew.

Matters went on in this way for some time; and it was now more than a year since Andrew had his first conversation with Father Dominick; during which period, by applying all his spare time to the study of the Testament, he had made himself a pretty good master of it, and was able, by the grace of God, "to give to every man that asked him, a reason of the hope that was in him, with meekness and fear." In the mean time Father Dominick had called, to know what had kept him from confession and mass. At first, he wanted courage to own the truth, and avoided giving a direct answer; but he afterwards began to consider, that he need not be ashamed of what he had been taught by the Word of God, and that it was his duty openly to avow his conviction of his former errors. He resolved, therefore, that the next time Father Dominick called, he would speak to him plainly

on the subject, and having acquitted his conscience before God, patiently abide all consequences.

Soon after this, Father Dominick called upon Andrew and sharply upbraided him with his neglect of duty. He used some very harsh and provoking language, and showed a disposition to treat poor Andrew more like a dog than a man. But *he* had been in the school of Christ, and had learned to be "*meek and lowly in heart*," and therefore, though his superstitious fear of the priest was entirely removed, yet he felt no inclination to use opprobrious language, but gently expostulated with him on his unbecoming warmth. "Ay," said Father Dominick, "I guessed this would be the consequence of your inquisitive spirit. You have learned, it seems, to despise your clergy, and you are no longer afraid of penance. I expected no better from your presumption, in taking upon you to read the Testament. If I had you in *Spain* or *Portugal*, I could soon set matters to right, by clapping you into the Inquisition,* and make you pay well for

* For the benefit of such of my readers as may not know what the Inquisition is, I shall give some account of it in this note. The Inquisition is a kind of Ecclesiastical Court, which takes cognizance of all kinds of heresies. It was instituted in the thirteenth century, by the Court of Rome, and admitted into some kingdoms of Europe, but resolutely and successfully opposed in others. The principal officers of this court are called "*Inquisitors of heretical pravity*." They occupy a building called the "*Palace of the Inquisition*," where they hold their sitting, for the trial of heretics. They have under them certain servants called "*familiars*," who execute their orders, and answer to our bailiffs in the ordinary courts of justice. When a person is suspected of heresy, one of these familiars is sent to seize him. This order is executed with such astonishing address and secrecy, that the man is missed without any one knowing what is become of him: and an instance stands recorded, of a man, his three sons, and three daughters, who all lived in the same house, being put into the prison of the Inquisition, and not knowing of each other being there till seven years after, when those *who were alive*, came forth in an "*Act of Faith*."

When the familiars have brought the offender into the prison, he is questioned by the Inquisitor; and if he denies, or persists in, his supposed heresy, his constancy is tried by various kinds of torture, such as roasting his feet at the fire, pouring water down his throat, till it runs out again at his mouth, plying his flesh with hot pincers, or stretching his limbs on the rack, till they are moved out of their sockets. If he stands all this, he is considered as incorrigible, and delivered over to the civil magistrate, to be committed to the flames. However, when the Inquisitors are giving him up to the magistrates, they charge him not on any account to hurt *the poor creature*.—A piece of hypocrisy so gross as scarcely to be believed, were not the

your presumption in disputing the authority of your clergy. But in this country, that vile *principle* of 'liberty of conscience' is so much in vogue, that every man may think for himself, and our power stands on the most slender footing." "Without intending to show any disrespect to you, sir," replied Andrew, "I cannot help expressing my thanks to God, that I live in a country where every man may judge for himself; nor do I think it much to the credit of any religion, that torture must be employed to keep men steady to it." This observation, so just in itself, and made with so much mildness, provoked Father Dominick to the highest pitch; so that he forgot his character, as a professed minister of the Prince

of darkness, as to destroy the possibility of doubt. If poor Andrew had lived in *Spain or Portugal*, he would have had to encounter all the rigour of the Inquisition, for the *great offence* of reading the Word of God; and if he had not given up what he found therein, and promised to offend no more in the same way, he would, in the end, have been committed to the flames as an incorrigible heretic. Perhaps some of my readers will scarcely credit this assertion, who do not know that the reading of the Scriptures is prohibited by the highest authority in the Church of Rome. For the conviction of such, I insert the following edict of the Council of Trent which I consider as one of the most stupendous monuments of human folly or wickedness to be met with in the annals of the world. Reader, behold it! "All Bibles extant, in the vulgar tongue, are prohibited, with all parts of them, either printed or manuscript, with all summaries and abridgments (although historical) of the Bible, and books of the Holy Scriptures, in the vulgar language or tongue." Did the members of this celebrated Council read the Scriptures or not? If they did not, they were surely but indifferent guides for the Catholic Church; and if they did, they seem to have had but little respect for the authority of Christ and his Apostles, when they could make such a decree in direct opposition to the following texts: "Jesus answered and said, Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures." Matt. xxii. 29. Again he says, "Search the Scriptures" John v. 39. The Apostle Paul praises those who read the Scriptures: "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so." Acts xvii. 11. And he speaks of Timothy with approbation, as one who had known the Scriptures from his earliest years: "From a child, thou hast known the Holy Scriptures." 2 Tim. iii. 15. But why say more on a point which cannot be disputed by any who abide by the word of God? Look to it, reader, that thou art not abetting this Anti-Christian decree! I shall conclude this note with the following short, but interesting anecdote. An eminent divine of the Roman Catholic Church, who seems to have possessed more honesty than prudence, asked one day in his sermon, "What is truth?" After pausing a little, he said, "I have found it at last," and, showing a New Testament, told his hearers that he held it in his hand. "But," added he, putting the book into his pocket again, "This volume is prohibited."

of Peace, and, raising up his hand, which held the whip, for he was on horseback, he threatened Andrew with immediate chastisement if he dared to speak any more in that way.* Andrew, who since he had read the Testament, knew what a minister of the gospel should be, was greatly shocked to behold such extravagance, and remained silent for a minute, until he perceived by the gradual return of his arm to its former position, that the priest was a little cooled. He then addressed him as follows: "Do you think, sir, by such a conduct as this, to recommend the religion of which you are a minister? Or do you expect to bring me back by such arguments as these? If you do, you are indeed much mistaken. A conviction that I *was* wrong, has produced the change in me, which seems to give you so much offence: and nothing, I hope, but more convincing reasons on the other side, will bring me back again. If you expect to do any thing with me, come into my house, and set before me your reasons; if I find them satisfactory, I trust you will not find me obstinate."

Father Dominick began, as he cooled, to feel a little ashamed of his conduct: and when he contrasted his own indecent warmth with the mildness of Andrew, he was so much humbled in his own eyes, that he had a mind at first to ride off, and leave him entirely to his fate. However, he said within himself, "If I go away, and refuse to debate the point with him, he will have a great triumph over me, and will tell all his neighbours that he foiled the priest; and he may thereby bring me into contempt with the rest of the people. Besides, he is a poor ignorant fellow, and I shall have no difficulty, if I can't convince him, in putting him to silence." He thought too, that, by consenting to such a proposal, he would wipe off the disgrace of his former rashness, and give an evidence of his condescension and humility. Under the influence of these reflections he resolved to go in; and dismounting, he tied his horse at the door, and took his seat by a fire within. Andrew sat down by him, and all the family drew nigh to hear a conversation which promised to be so interesting.

* Those who are acquainted with the manner of many of the Roman Catholic Clergy of Ireland toward any of their flock, who may prove at all refractory, will not be surprised at this threat of Father Dominick.

CHAPTER III.

Andrew's long conversation with Father Dominick, and what happened at the end of it.

"Is it not," said Father Dominick, beginning the Dialogue, "a strange piece of presumption in such a man as you are, to venture on a dispute about religion with one like me, who can read and write Latin, and has been brought up to these things?"

Andrew. "What's every man's concern, Sir, must be simple in itself. If I want to measure a piece of cloth, and have no yard to measure it with, I must take it by guess, or on the report of another: but if I have a yard, I apply it to the cloth, and it does not require much education to know how much there is in it."

Father D. "What do you mean by that?"

Andrew. "I mean, Sir, that God has given me a measure to judge by, and that my business is to apply that measure, which, I believe, does not require so much education as you, Sir, seem to think."

Father D. "Oh! I see what you are at: you mean, I suppose, that the Scripture is given you to judge by, and that every thing is to be measured by that rule. Is it not so?"

Andrew. "Exactly so, Sir."

Father D. "But have you considered, that *that* book is fit only for the learned, and that such uneducated people as you, have nothing to do with it?"

Andrew. "I know that you often told me so, Sir, before I read it; but when I came to read it, and prayed for grace to understand it, I found it simple and easy to be understood. I do not pretend that I can explain every part of it; nor I believe can the wisest man upon earth; but, by the grace of God, I trust I have seen enough in it to make me "wise unto salvation."

Father D. "Truly, you are one of the most impudent fellows I ever met with, to think you understand the Scriptures, when even men of learning and education find it hard to explain them!"

Andrew. "I am not ashamed to confess, Sir, that I have no pretensions to learning. But, perhaps, if you consider the following verses, which I have met with in the Testament, you will not lay so much stress on learn-

ing. Our blessed Lord says, "I thank thee, O Father: that thou hast hid these things from the *wise* and *prudent*, and hast revealed them unto *babes*." Matthew xi, 25. And again; "Except ye be converted, and become as *little children*, ye shall not enter the kingdom of Heaven." Matthew xviii, 3. St. Paul too says; "Not many *wise men*, after the flesh, are called." 1 Cor. i, 26. And again; "If any man among you seemeth to be *wise* in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise." 1 Cor. iii, 18. I could bring other texts of the same kind; but these are enough to show that our Saviour, and his Apostles, did not make so much account of learning as many are disposed to do. Moreover, Sir, you know, as well as I can tell you, that our blessed Master, Jesus Christ, when he was upon earth, was chiefly employed in speaking to the poor: and that his discourses to the poor, are given to us in the *New Testament*. Now, Sir, I can see no reason why a poor *Irishman* should not be as well *able to understand* our Lord's word, as a poor *Jew*; nor can see why poor *Irishmen* should be prevented from reading what he, who was wiser than all of us, thought fit that poor *Jews* should read.

Father Dominick, who did not expect such reasoning from Andrew, was a little perplexed by his argument, and, in fact, found himself unable to answer it. He was obliged, therefore, to defend himself behind the infallibility of the Church, and to say, "that the Church, in her wisdom, had forbidden the reading of the Scriptures." Such an argument as this, had, for some time, lost all its effect upon Andrew, and he observed, "that he needed no more to convince him that the Church in whose favour his reverence pleaded could not be the true Church." This was rather too much for Father Dominick's patience; but remembering how he exposed himself before, he kept in his anger, as well as he could, and told him, that, since he would have the Scriptures, he might; and that he would show him out of those Scriptures, that all he objected to in the Holy Catholic Church, was of Divine authority and appointment.

Andrew. "If you can do that, Sir, I promise to return into the bosom of what you call the Catholic Church."

Father D. "Come, then, let me hear what you object to."

Andrew. "I consider the whole unsound; but some of the principal things to which I object, are—*The Mass*

—*Confession—Penance and Absolution—Anointing—Purgatory—praying to saints—and, above all, Human merit!*”

Father D. “Let us begin then with the *Mass*.—The mass is that service in which the elements of bread and wine are consecrated by the priest, and changed into the real body and blood of Christ, and offered up to God an unbloody sacrifice for sin. Now you need only look into the Testament, which you think is all on your side, and you will there find, that Christ says of the bread, in so many words, ‘This is my body;’ and of the wine, ‘This is my blood.’ What can you say against a matter so plain in itself?”

Andrew. “I acknowledge, Sir, that the words are to be found, as you have stated them. But you will please to observe, that every word is not to be understood in a strict literal sense. St. Paul says of the rock, out of which the water came to the Israelites, ‘That rock was Christ.’ 1 Cor. x, 4. But surely it would be wrong to suppose that the piece of stone was *really* Christ; yet we have as good a right to say it was, as that the bread and wine in the mass are his *real* body and blood. I am not learned, Sir; but common sense teaches me, that if our Saviour’s words may be understood in such a way as does not make him speak what *seems* the greatest contradiction imaginable, it is in that sense that they should be explained. Now, Sir, if I take those words as if they signified that this bread and wine did actually become flesh and blood, I must suppose, first, that a *part* of our Lord’s body was placed upon the table, after he had blessed the bread, though at the same time his body remained whole; or, more strictly speaking, that his body was removed entirely out of its place, while it remained entirely in it. For if he says, ‘This is my body,’ and that is to be literally understood, then it was his *whole* body, and not a *part* of it, that took the place of the bread. Secondly, I must suppose that a crumb of bread, not weighing perhaps half an ounce, really weighs several stone. Thirdly, I must suppose that what looks like bread, feels like bread, and tastes like bread, is contrary to what my eyes, my hands, and my mouth declare it to be, flesh and blood. And, lastly, I must suppose what is worse than all besides, that our Lord’s people are fed with carnal and not with spiritual meat?”

Father D. "This is judging by sense, and not by faith."

Andrew. "Sir, if our Lord had said, 'This which you see is no longer bread, but is actually changed into the substance of my body, notwithstanding its resemblance to bread,' it would have been the duty of his disciples to have believed his words, in spite of the evidence of all their senses; but as he did not so explain himself, it seems plain, that I am no more to understand him literally, than when he says, 'I am the door,' or 'I am the way.' We are told that our Lord turned water into wine at a marriage feast; but he did not give them a liquor with all the appearance and properties of water, and tell them it was wine. And when he raised Lazarus from the dead, he gave to him all the appearance and properties of a living man; but he did not require his disciples to believe that Lazarus, lying in the tomb, not showing the least symptom of life, was really a living man, walking about, speaking and acting like other living men. Moreover, Sir, our Saviour himself has given us a key to all passages of this kind, when he says, 'The words that I speak unto you they are *spirit* and they are *life*.' 'It is the spirit that quickeneth, *the flesh profiteth nothing*.' Besides, Sir, our Lord says, 'Do this in remembrance of me;' which shows me, that he intended this supper to bring to our memory what he had suffered for his people. But after all, Sir, I can't help asking you two questions on this subject.—One is, Where do you find, in our Lord's proceedings on this occasion, any thing like what the priests do when they celebrate mass? I own the striking difference between what I have seen in the chapel, and what I have read in the gospel, greatly amazes me. Why, Sir, a stranger might think that the priest was acting a part in a play for the amusement of the audience, rather than leading the worship of that God who will be worshipped in spirit and in truth.* The second question I would ask, is—By what right do you refuse the wine to the laity? For he who desired his disciples to take the bread, bid them also take the cup."

* In the celebration of mass, the priest puts himself into *thirty-five* different postures, so that Andrew's allusion seems to be a very just one. These *thirty-five* postures may be seen in Picart's Ceremonies.

These were two puzzling questions for Father Dominick; and all he could say, was, that the church had so ordained it, and therefore it must be right.* But Andrew was resolved to keep to the Testament, and would not yield one inch of ground unless he was driven from it by clear texts taken out of the word of God.

"I have been endeavouring," said Andrew, "to know why the clergy of the Romish Church are so stiff upon this point, which leaves them more open to attack than any other maintained by them: and, without meaning any personal offence, I will take the liberty of mentioning what strikes me as the probable cause. Perhaps they have thought that those who believed they could thus change a piece of bread into the body of Christ, would be disposed to pay them the highest reverence; and that this was one of the shortest and surest ways to become 'lords over God's heritage.'"[†]

* When the Roman Catholics are pressed by the argument derived from Christ's example in giving the cup as well as the bread to his disciples, they answer, that they who were with Christ were not laymen, but apostles, and that, therefore, his practice was similar to theirs. A ready answer to this presents itself. I turn to the eleventh chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, and I there find the Apostle speaking in the following language; "As often as ye eat this bread *and drink this cup*, ye do show the Lord's death till he come;" and again, "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread *and drink of that cup*." Now I would ask this simple question? Was all the Corinthian church composed of *clergymen*, or not? If it was, it was the most singular phenomenon that has ever appeared; and if it was not, the argument against withholding the cup from the laity, is unanswerable. If it be said, the Church has power to make such alterations; I answer, if the Church chooses to call white black, I shall continue to call it white while the world lasts. The truth is plainly this—The cup is kept from the laity, first, to add to the dignity of the clergy; for, in the Romish Church, the people are nothing, the clergy every thing; and, secondly, to prop up the doctrine of the real presence. "We give you the bread alone," say they to the people, "because, under one of the elements, you have both flesh and blood." And the fact is, that while the people are going on in their sins, it is of very little consequence whether they have one or both, or neither one nor the other of them.

† Some may think that Andrew shows more cleverness than might have been expected from his first interview with the priest. But let it be remembered, that Andrew was, at that time, said to be a "shrewd and sensible man," and even then showed strong symptoms of his character; since which time he had read the Testament with much study and prayer; and, after all, he reasons here only as a man who was acquainted with that part of the word of God, and who had a good natural understanding, no longer clouded by prejudice and bigotry. That

Father Dominick told him, he was an impudent censorious fellow, and, as no good Christian could doubt the real presence, he bid him to pass on to the next objection.*

his conjecture was not a bad one, may appear from the following fact among others:—One Father Nitard, a person of eminence in Spain, happened to receive an affront from the Duke of Lerma, to whom he said, “You ought to revere the man who has, every day your God in his hands, and your Queen at his feet.” He was the Queen’s confessor.

* The whole force of the Roman Catholic argument turns upon the propriety of taking the literal sense of our Saviour’s words, “This is my body,” and, “this is my blood;” but see to what this will lead us. He says, “*This cup is the New Testament.*” Now if we take his words literally, it is the cup and not the wine, that is to be drank; for he does not say, “*This wine is the New Testament in my blood,*” but, “*This cup,*” &c. See then to what absurdities we are led by this mode of reasoning. We must first believe a cup to be wine, and then the wine to be blood, and *that* the *very* blood which was flowing through the veins of a living body, then present, and sitting at the table on which the cup stood; which body, however, was lying at the very same moment upon the table, in the form of a piece of bread!!! Do I not see, in the advocates for such a tenet, an awful instance of the fulfilment of that prophecy: “For this cause (that is, because they received not the love of the truth,) God shall send them strong delusion that *they* should believe a lie!” 2 Thess. ii, 11. I shall beg leave here to relate the following anecdote, which, perhaps, may have more weight with many than the most laboured argument.

It is related that a Roman Catholic Gentleman in England being about to marry a Protestant Lady, it was mutually agreed that there should be no contest on the subject of religion. For some years after their union, this agreement was scrupulously observed; but, in process of time, the priest, who paid them frequent visits, expecting an easy prey, began to talk about the peculiarities of his religion. He particularly insisted upon the doctrine of transubstantiation, and grew troublesome by his importunity. The Lady bethought herself how to get rid of him; and one day seeming to be overcome by his arguments, she agreed to attend at mass with her husband the following Sunday, provided she might be allowed to prepare the wafer herself. The priest, not suspecting any thing, and glad, on any terms, to secure such a convert, gave his consent. The lady accordingly appeared at the chapel with her husband, and, after the consecration of the wafer which she had brought with her, she solemnly demanded of the priest, whether it was really converted into the body of Christ; to which question he, without hesitation, replied, *That there was a Conversion made of the whole substance of the bread into the body of Christ, and that there remained no more of its former substance.* If this be really the case, said she, you may eat the wafer, without any danger: but as for *myself*, I should be afraid to touch it, as it is mixed with arsenic. The priest was thunderstruck by a discovery so unexpected, and was too wise to hazard his life upon a doctrine for which he had however contended with all the earnestness of perfect assurance. The Lady’s husband was so struck by this practical confutation of a

Andrew. "You tell your flock, Sir, that you have a right to require of them to confess their sins in your ear, and to put *penance* upon them, and then to give them *absolution*."

Father D. "To be sure we do; what good Christian ever doubted it?"

Andrew. "I should thank you, Sir, to show me any thing in the Testament which supports this pretension."

Father D. "I can do it very easily. 'Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained,' John xx, 23. What do you say to that?"

Andrew. "Are you sure, Sir, that you understand those words rightly? And can you believe, that, by authority of this word, every parish priest may require his flock to confess, appoint them penance, and give them absolution? Take Father L. of the parish of N. a man who was found more than once lying drunk upon the road; or take Father M. of the parish of O. a man who is an unchaste liver; will you maintain that such men can give absolution to the sinner? No, Sir, be well assured that such men, (though priests,) if they remain impenitent, will be cast into the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone. But, after all, Sir, where is confession in the ear of a priest spoken of?"

Father D. "St. James says, v, 16. 'Confess your faults.'"

Andrew. "I am much surprised, sir, that you should pretend that this is any thing to the purpose. If you would take the rest of the words, you would see the apostle's meaning.—'Confess your faults one to another;' from which it is plain that St. James did not mean any thing like confession to a priest. And where is the right to appoint *penance* to your people given you in the Testament?"

doctrine which he had before implicitly believed, that he never afterwards appeared at the mass.

If any one should dispute the authenticity of the above relation, I must observe, that the argument is equally good, whether the circumstance alluded to be false or true. Nor let any one say, that the priest has no power over *Arsenic*, but *Bread* only; for a few grains of the poison would produce deadly effects, and still, the whole substance is called *Bread*, with as much propriety as if there happened to be as many grains of sand in it, which, it must be confessed, would not render it unfit for consecration.

Father D. "Ay, I thought how it was; the matter is out now. You do not like the wholesome discipline of Mother Church; and this is the real cause of your quarrel with her."

Andrew. "Far from it, sir; for, since I have read the Testament, my outward conduct has been quite changed; so that, by the grace of God, I am no longer given up to different sins, as I formerly was; and, therefore, I should have nothing to fear from your penances on my own account; but I want to know where you find it in the word of God?"

Father D. "Have you not read what St. Paul says, 'Deliver such an one to Satan, for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus?' 1 Cor. v. 5.

Andrew. "St. Paul shows his meaning by what follows: 'Therefore,' he says, 'put away from among yourselves that wicked person.' 1 Cor. v. 13. From which it appears, first, that the priest is wrong, when he takes upon himself what the apostle directs the society of christians to do; secondly, that, when he causes the person to inflict punishment upon his own body, he does what he should not do: because the order is not, 'Make them do penance;' but, 'Put such an one away from among you.' "*

* Poor Andrew labours under a disadvantage in all this argument, for want of an acquaintance with Church history. In the primitive Church, when a man committed an offence, he was admonished by the pastor, and, if the case required it, he was deprived of Church privileges till he had testified his repentance; when this was done, he was absolved from the censure, and restored. From such a simple origin has arisen all that power which the Roman Catholic Clergy have exercised over their flocks, in consequence of their supposed authority to absolve the sinner. When or how penance was introduced is not so certain; but one thing is very certain, that there is no trace of it in the word of God; for what is translated in the Roman Catholic Bible, "Do penance," is, in reality, "repent," which is quite a different thing. It appears, however, that penance, was very soon practised, though not till the Church of Christ had, in some degree, departed from its original purity. However, much was to be done before things could be brought to the footing on which they now stand in the Church of Rome. The offender, in the primitive ages, used to confess, not to the *minister in private*, but before the Church; and, when penance was afterwards introduced, it was not imposed by the mere authority of the minister, but in conjunction with the rest. It required some address in the Clergy to effect an alteration of such importance as that of auricular confession: but the growing degeneracy of the Christian Church favoured their views. People did not like, after some time, *publicly* to acknowledge their faults; and the Clergy,

Father D. "Penance is a wholesome discipline, and answers an important end."

Andrew. "To the Clergy it does, sir; because it keeps the people in awe of them, and makes them more afraid of the priest than they are of God himself; and this is not saying more than the truth, for they are breaking God's commandments every day; but the priest's commands *must* be obeyed, let what will come. I remember, sir, when I used to confess, having been drunk, I had a very light penance put upon me; but, being led one day to go and hear a sermon, which was not preached by a priest, (though as I thought a very good one,) you made me go round the chapel on my knees, and imposed many other hardships upon me, which I was then simple enough to submit to. Now, sir, was it a greater sin to go to hear a sermon than to get drunk? No; but doing the one looked like judging for myself, which you considered the greatest crime I could commit; but, by the other, I only broke one of God's commands, which did not affect the authority of the clergy. Does it not appear, then, that penance is employed more as a matter of convenience for the clergy than for the purpose of preventing sin? And does it not serve rather to keep the people in awe of the priest than to keep them from offending God? You say penance is of use; but how, sir? What are you able to effect by it? Can you keep your people from open and scandalous sins? You know you cannot; you can frighten them into the keeping Lent, or observing an holy-day; or you can keep them from praying with those whom you call heretics:

taking advantage of this disposition, persuaded the people that it would do as well to confess to *them in private*. This was a great point gained; and was necessarily followed by a discretionary exercise of authority in the imposition of penance. From this time, those who in Scripture are exhorted to be examples to the flock, became "lords over God's heritage," and used their power with a high hand. Something, however, remained yet to be done, to accomplish the schemes of the Clergy. They wanted profit as well as authority. In this they were soon gratified by the invention of indulgences; one branch of which is, the remission or mitigation of penance, upon the payment of a stipulated sum. When any person, who had more money than patience, complained of the hardship of the penance enjoined him, he was allowed to change the punishment into payment of money; and thus the offender and his judge were mutually satisfied. This mode of commuting penance for money became afterwards fashionable, and the Pope and Clergy were abundantly enriched by a contrivance so ingenious.

but you cannot make them sober, or chaste, or honest; where then is the use of your penance? And as to your *absolution*, where is the need of it? If God forgives us, what occasion have we for the absolution of the priest? And if he does not forgive us, the priest's absolution cannot deliver us from the punishment which our sins deserve."

Father D. "I tell you, man, as I told you before, you are a very great blockhead; for the church has settled all this matter long before either you or I were born; and you may as well attempt to shake the foundation of the world, as to overthrow the infallibility of the church."

Andrew thought the word of God better deserved the character of *infallibility* than what *Father Dominick* called the Church; and, as he was resolved not to allow a point that could not be proved out of that word, he and his antagonist could not agree on this article, and so they were obliged to pass on to another: That was *extreme unction*, or the anointing of the body with oil by the priest before death.

"As to this," said *Father Dominick*, "there can be no dispute about the matter; for *St. James* says plainly, 'Is any man sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.'" *James* v, 14. What can you say to this?"

Andrew. "Why, sir, this I will say, that you have repeated only a part of the passage, by which means you keep the apostle's meaning out of sight. He adds, 'and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.' Now, sir, though I don't pretend fully to understand the matter, I see enough to show me that you put a wrong meaning upon it. You anoint a man, supposing he is dying, to give him a passport to heaven. But if he should happen to recover, he must be anointed over again, when he afterwards seems to be in a dying state. A child may see that *St. James* is talking of the sick man's being raised up, after he is anointed, by the prayer of faith; so that your anointing and *St. James's* are two very different things. I remember, when I was supposed to be dying, about five years ago, I sent for you, sir, in great haste, to anoint me, thinking I should go

to Hell, if I did not get the rites of my church. The bed on which I lay was not more insensible to true religion than I was at the time; nevertheless, without much ado, you anointed me presently, and assured me I should go to Heaven. Oh, sir! if I had then died, I must indeed have been lost forever; and I cannot even now think of the danger I was in, without trembling; nor can I remember the sparing mercy of my Saviour without tears of gratitude and praise."

Father D. "You're a very presumptuous fellow; and wo be unto you, when you come to die, if you are not anointed by a priest!"

Andrew. "Indeed, sir, I have not the least intention of looking for it; the word of God makes no mention of it in the sense you mean; and I have no fear, if I die in a simple dependence on the atoning death of my Saviour, that I shall fall short of Heaven. No, sir, I bless God, the sting of death is removed, and, if called upon, I trust, through grace, I should not now fear to die."

"Presumptuous fool!" cried Father Dominick.

Andrew. "When I was living in my sins, sir, you never called me a fool; how is it that I am become a fool, now that I have left them?"

"Come, come," said Father Dominick: "let us hasten to the next point. You almost put me out of patience with your nonsense."*

Purgatory came next before them.

Father D. "So you do not believe in Purgatory, since you read the Testament?"

Andrew. "I can find nothing like it there, sir."

Father D. "Can't you indeed? That's strange, when

* I must help poor Andrew here. He was able to show that the priest's anointing was very different from St. James's, but he could not explain the passage in a satisfactory manner. The case appears to be this: In the primitive Church the gift of healing the sick was bestowed on different individuals; and they were accustomed, before they uttered the prayer of faith, to anoint the patient with oil. Whether the oil had any medical effect, it is not important to inquire. Probably not. The case relates to miraculous cures, as may be gathered from a passage in the Gospel by St. Mark: "And they anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them." Chap. vi, 13. If the doctrine of Father Dominick were true, it would be, "They anointed many that were sick, and put them into their coffins." For that is the next step, after their being anointed. O, unhappy men, how long will you be blind to the true meaning of Scripture; and for the sake of holding your vain traditions, set every rule of plain interpretation at defiance.

so many great men could find it there. What do you think St. Paul meant, when he said, "The fire shall try every man's work, of what kind it is?" 1 Cor. iii, 13.

Andrew. "I think the meaning is very plain, sir; so plain that an unprejudiced man, of common sense, can hardly mistake it. By looking at the passage, you will see that the apostle is speaking of the different doctrines which might be taught by different people after the foundation of truth had been laid. Some of these he compares to 'gold, silver, and precious stones,' meaning sound doctrine; and some to 'wood, hay, and stubble,' meaning unsound doctrine. Now he says, all these shall undergo a trial at last; and what was so proper to try the different materials which he spake of, as fire? If the doctrines were like 'gold, silver or precious stones,' we all know that they would receive no hurt by the fire, but the contrary. But if they were like 'wood, hay, or stubble,' they would be consumed by the fire. But what has this to do with a place to burn the souls of men in, to purify and fit them for Heaven."

Father Dominick looked at the place, and read it over, after he heard Andrew's explanation, and could not but see, that there was something reasonable in his way of understanding it: however, he told him "that he saw only the surface of the thing, and that the Church, which saw deeper than he, had declared that there was such a place as *Purgatory*, and that was enough."

Andrew. "Don't be offended, sir, if I say what I think on this subject. It is this, that purgatory would never be so much contended for, if it were not for the profit that arises from it to the clergy. I can well remember, sir, when I used to give you money to help to pay for masses to get my old acquaintances and friends out of purgatory. Now, sir, if you have such a power, I think you should be very happy to use it, merely out of charity to the poor burning souls, without looking for any payment. But when I see that all these masses must be paid for, before they can be said, I cannot but suspect that the true cause why purgatory is maintained, is, the benefit which arises from it to the clergy. Nor can I be persuaded that they are sincere, until I see them taking all the pains in their power, without fee or reward, to help the souls that, they say, are in a suffering state. Even then, though I shall

believe them to be in earnest, I shall, from holy Scripture, oppose the doctrine, because, beside other objections to it, it gives to purgatory what is every where said to be done by the blood of Christ, according to that passage. 'The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin;' which would not be true, if a part of the work were left to purgatory."

Father D. "I told you before, and I tell you again, that you are a great blockhead, and a most uncharitable fellow; and no one can expect to get any good of you, while you think that you know better than the Church."

Andrew. "The word of God, sir, is my guide; and I can admit nothing that is not proved from it."

As they could not agree about Purgatory, they were obliged to pass on to Andrew's next objection, which was the *praying to Saints*.

Andrew. "What authority, sir, have you, in the word of God, for praying to saints?"

Father Dominick was now fairly aground, and could find nothing in Scripture to countenance praying to saints. He just hinted at the rich man in Hell praying to Abraham. But, unluckily, the example of a damned spirit is a bad subject of imitation for the pious on earth; and he saw this: so taking refuge again behind the infallibility of the Church, he bid Andrew go on to the next objection.

"I could," said Andrew, "speak much about the impious titles given to the Virgin Mary, such as 'mother of mercy,' 'refuge of sinners,' 'gate of heaven,' &c.* I

* The following is an extract of one of the hymns of the Romish Church, and shows to what excess they carry their veneration for the Virgin Mary: "O happy mother, expiating our wickedness, employ thy maternal authority, and *command* the Redeemer:"—a mode of address, which shows an infatuation almost incredible. The poor Roman Catholics of Ireland are taught to venerate the Virgin Mary from their earliest years. When they want to express their best wishes for you, it is by calling on God, and the blessed Virgin, to bestow their benefits upon you; an expression which can scarcely be heard, where there is true religion, without horror. What makes this adoration of the Virgin more surprising, is that our Lord, foreseeing it, seems to have plainly declared against it. Only turn to the Gospel by St. Luke, 11th chapter, 27th verse. You there see the same spirit breaking out, that has since produced so much idolatry. "And it came to pass as he spake these things, a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice, and said unto him, "Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked!" How soon the desire of magnifying the mother of

could show the absurdity of beads, holy-water, and so forth. But I shall come to what I think the worst of all, and that is, the way in which sinners are to obtain the favour of God. I always used to think, before I read the word of God, that, if I did not commit any great sin, and went regularly to my duties, as they were called, I was a good Christian; and if, when I came to die, I enjoyed the rites of my Church, there was no fear of me. This was what I learned, and *all* I learned, at the Chapel; and so I went on until I was forty years old. But since I have read the Testament, I find the case is very different from what I thought it was. That book, which contains the wisdom of God, tells me, first, that I and all mankind are sinners before God; that we all, on account of sin, deserve eternal misery: and that our nature is entirely corrupt and wicked; according to those passages, ‘That every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.’ Rom. iii, 19. ‘The carnal mind is enmity against God,’ Rom. viii, 7. ‘The flesh lusteth against the spirit.’ Gal. v, 17. and, out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness.” Mark vii, 21, 22. It tells me, secondly, that those who are saved, are freely by the grace of God, through the death and merits of Jesus Christ, without any merit of their own, according to what follows; ‘Being justified,’ that is, pardoned, and received into favour, ‘freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God.’ Rom. iii, 24, 25. And again; “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy, he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.” Titus iii, 5. Again, it

Jesus began to appear! But what does he say? “Yea, *rather*, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.” Now hear this, ye that pretend to honour Jesus, by worshipping his mother, and calling her the “Queen of Heaven!” Jesus condemns your misapplied devotion, and shows you that his mother has no particular privileges above others, but that whatever blessings she had, arose from this, that she heard the word of God, and kept it; a blessing which is common to all true believers.

tells me that those who partake of this salvation are made partakers of it *by faith*, according to numberless passages which I could mention, but of which the following will be sufficient for the present purpose; “‘Therefore, we conclude, that a man is justified by faith.’ Rom. iii, 28. And again, ‘Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.’ Rom. v, 1. And again, ‘By grace are ye saved, through faith.’ Eph. ii, 8. That book tells me, moreover, sir, that those who are made partakers of this precious faith, are by its means united to Christ, as a branch is united to its tree, or a limb to its body; that they resist sin in every degree; that they overcome the world; that they are zealous of good works, and devote themselves to God. To prove this, there is no need to do any thing but open the Testament, in any part of it; and it will appear to every unprejudiced person, that this is what it teaches. And this, surely, sir, is a doctrine according to godliness. I have found it most delightful to my own mind; and would not give up my own interest in it for a thousand, thousand worlds.”

Andrew’s heart warmed as he proceeded: and he felt such love to Father Dominick, and such compassion for his state, and that of his flock, that he could not refrain from giving scope to his feelings. “O sir,” said he, “when I consider your awful circumstances, as a man professing to teach the sinners the way to salvation, while in my soul I know you entirely mistake the true meaning of the word of God; when I consider, moreover, the account you will have to give at last of the souls which you have either neglected or deluded; methinks, I could weep my eyes out because of your situation; and if, by giving my life, I could remove from you the evil day, I would cheerfully, I trust, with God’s help, resign it for your sake. But that will not do; no, sir, you must reflect upon your state, and——.” Here Andrew was interrupted by Father Dominick, who got up from his seat with much anger, and asked him what he meant by affronting him in such a manner; telling him, at the same time, that, if he had known how it would have been, he would never have set his foot in his house. Then turning to the rest of his family, he said to them, “are you all determined to follow this fellow in his wicked apostacy from the Church?” All but the eldest answered without hesitation, “that if they

had any doubts before, what they saw and heard that day, had convinced them that Andrew was *right*, and that he was *wrong*."

Father D. "Since this is the case, I give you notice, that unless, by your repentance, you prevent it, I will cut you all off from the Church next Sunday."

So saying, he took his hat, clapped the door violently, got upon his horse, and rode away. Father Dominick said within himself, "This last argument will convince him; or, if not, it will, at least, frighten his wife and children; but if this should not be the case, for example's sake, they must be dealt with in this way, to deter others from the like practices."—Andrew, however, was not at all affected by the menaces of Father Dominick, knowing that he had no power to hurt him; but he was distressed to see a man, under the character of a minister of Christ, so ignorant of the true meaning of his word, and so destitute of the spirit of the Gospel. Father Dominick, finding that Andrew and his family held out, was as good as his word, and cut them off (except the one of whom he had yet some hope) from the communion of the Church of Christ, (as he called it,) on the following Sunday. When Andrew was made acquainted with it, he could not but pity the man who could suppose that his state was really affected by such an exclusion as this. Andrew was too well acquainted with the immoral lives of many in the congregation, to suppose, even for a moment, that they formed any part of the true Church of Christ, whose members are holy. He knew that if he had continued in his sins, he would never have been excluded, and that it was only since he became acquainted with true religion, that he became an object of dislike to Father Dominick; he rather rejoiced, therefore, that he was accounted worthy to suffer shame, for the sake of his heavenly Master, and earnestly prayed that he might be enabled to bear insult and opposition without anger and impatience.*

* Father Dominick, in his precipitate retreat, had forgotten to bring his heavy artillery to bear upon poor Andrew; and therefore, lest any one should suppose it to be less formidable than it really is, I shall receive its fire, and try if I cannot silence it by the grand batteries of reason and Scripture.

Unity, Universality, and Sanctity, are the artillery with which the Church of *Rome* has often done so much execution in the world, and which are still employed with no inconsiderable effect. Let us not be

In the course of reading the New Testament, Andrew perceived, that there were many passages which referred to another book, with which he had no acquaintance, and afraid of their sound, but meet them boldly, and I am persuaded that we shall find them all perfectly harmless.

By the *Unity* of the Church, I suppose it means, first, her having a common centre, or head, in the Pope. But, I would ask, "In what place does Christ say that his Church should have a visible head on earth?" Perhaps you will answer: "in that passage where he says, 'There shall be one fold and one shepherd.'" But that place evidently points to himself as the shepherd, uniting both Jews and Gentiles in one fold. Indeed, so plain is the application of the passage, that a man must be incorrigibly dull, or blinded by prejudice, to put any other interpretation upon it. But secondly, *Unity* may mean the agreement in respect to doctrine, &c., which is to be found in the Church of Rome. This, however, will be found, upon examination, to be a complete deception. It is no wonder, indeed, that there should be an *apparent* agreement, in these respects, among the members of a Church, wherein the greatest crime any person can be guilty of, is to think for himself; and fire and sword have been employed to prevent men from uttering any thing inconsistent with what that Church has chosen to decree! The Pope thinks for the Bishops, the Bishops for the inferior clergy, and they for the whole body of the laity. We need not wonder then, if, where such exertions are employed to stifle all inquiry, there should be, in general, a *show* of agreement. But they are much mistaken, who think there have not been many hot disputes, and those of a most interesting kind, among the members of the Roman Church. Not to mention many others, the contests between the Jesuits and Jansenists in France, are a striking proof of the truth of this observation, and show how little the advocates of the Church of Rome can boast of *unity* of sentiment, even on points of the greatest importance. But, say you, "Is not *Unity* one of the characters of the true Church?" Agreed! But it is "the unity of the spirit," of which Jesus Christ himself is the true centre—a unity *this* as different from Roman Catholic unity, as genuine loyalty is from forced submission.

Universality is next to be examined. This is generally considered as to *place* and *time*. Now, if by "Universality of place," it is meant that the Roman Catholic religion is to be found every where, that is not true. But if it be only meant, that it is to be found in every place where the Christian religion is professed, this is but little to the point. It may be true, and prove nothing. Let the Inquisition be once removed from Roman Catholic countries, and full liberty of conscience be granted, and we may venture to affirm that there would soon be Protestants in every part of Christendom. Why else has the Pope always shown himself so anxious to introduce this most dreadful engine of ecclesiastical tyranny wherever he could, and so unwilling to give it up, where it has obtained an establishment? Does not the conduct of the Pope and his friends, in this instance, show plainly how much they are afraid of free inquiry, and justify the assertion, that, if this and other instruments of terror were removed, the religion of Rome would not be the only one who could say, that the members of her communion are to be found in every part of the Christian world? As to *Universality of time* (as this is one

without which he saw that those passages were not easily, if at all, intelligible. Unwilling to leave any part of it, if possible, without being cleared up, he felt a strong of the most popular and successful arguments employed by the advocates of the Roman Church,) we must look it fairly in the face, and see what credit it deserves. "Our church," say they, "is from the beginning; yours is of a modern date; only three hundred years old at most." Stop, stop, good sirs, we have something to say to you, before we can allow you to triumph in the strength of this argument. That your Church is very ancient, that it soon began to operate we readily admit. But we deny that this proves any thing more than the Church of Christ was corrupted from its primitive simplicity. And that this was the case, is plain from what the apostle Paul says in the 2d Epistle to the Thessalonians, 2d chapter, and 7th verse: "The mystery of iniquity doth already work;" that is, the principle which brought about the grand apostacy, was even at that early period in exercise. As soon as the clergy began to grow worldly-minded, which was very soon the case, they were for turning every thing to their own account, and making the mistaken devotion of the people subservient to the gratification of their ambition or avarice. To this fruitful source may be traced all those deviations from the original simplicity of the Gospel which are to be found in the Church of Rome. *The Mass, Purgatory, Confession, Authoritative Absolution*, with a long train of others, are but inventions and alterations of the clergy to fill their coffers, or gratify their pride. The *power and dignity of the Pope* may be traced to the same source. Any one who is acquainted with the early history of the Church, if he is not blinded by prejudice, can tell, that the Bishop of Rome in the beginning presided only over a small district, and by gradual encroachments upon the rights of others, favoured by his situation as Bishop of the imperial city, and other circumstances, attained in process of time to a state of splendour and authority, that was never so much as dreamt of in the early ages of Christianity. To what then does this much boasted argument amount? To nothing more than this, *That the beautiful simplicity of religion was soon corrupted, and a system of error and delusion substituted in its place.* Universality of time, therefore, as applied to the Roman Catholic Church, is without any foundation. That it is *ancient, very ancient*, we admit; that it is *original*, we absolutely deny. Its deviations from the word of God may be traced, and an account given of the introduction of its leading peculiarities. Let no one then call a departure from what is itself a departure from truth, *a novelty!* No length of time can sanctify error, nor can the most plausible imposture sanction a lie. The word of God is our *only* rule; and I would rather be supported by *one single* text of Scripture, than by all the writings of the fathers, decrees of councils, papal bulls, and apostolical traditions and constitutions in the world.

Sanctity next comes before us. On this head I must appeal to matter of fact. If the Church of Rome be holy, we may fairly expect that at the time when this Church most prevailed, most holiness was to be found. But when did this Church most prevail? From the ninth to the sixteenth century. And when was the Christian world most dark, and most wicked? During the very same period. For the truth of which fact I confidently appeal to the evidence of history. Again, if this Church

desire to know what the book in question was; and not knowing any one whom he thought so well qualified to answer his inquiries on this head as the kind lady who had given him the Testament, he determined within himself that he would take an opportunity of letting her know his perplexity, and asking her advice on the occasion. He wished too to take an opportunity of thanking her for her former present; he accordingly seized upon the first opportunity which offered, to express his grateful sense of the kindness which the good lady had shown him; and, after many apologies, begged leave to ask her, whether he could get the book which was so often spoken of in the Testament; he saw plainly that till he got *that*, many parts of what he had read would remain unintelligible to him. She told him that the book referred to was the *Old Testament*, or that part of the Sacred Scriptures which was written before our Saviour's appearing upon earth. At the same time she promised to get him a *Bible*, which comprehends both the *Old* and *New Testament*. Accordingly, Andrew was made happy, after a short time, by the possession of a *Bible*. He read the Old Testament with great satisfaction; and though there were parts which he did not understand, yet there were many more which he did. He was much delighted with the

be holy, we may fairly expect to find most holiness in those countries where it is best understood, and most prevalent. But what says matter of fact? To say nothing of Spain and Portugal, let us look to Italy, the very centre of the system. In what nation under heaven is there greater profligacy of manners? Are not the Italians, even to a proverb, dark, vindictive, and cruel? And are not those tempers as opposite to the Gospel, as darkness to light? But look at Rome! and you *there* behold, under the very eye of the Pope, one of the most dissolute capitals in the world. And I believe I do his Holiness no injustice, when I say that his court differs in nothing from those of other temporal princes, except perhaps in a greater *show* of religion, and more *real* profligacy of manners. But let us for a moment turn away from other countries, and look upon our own. In conversing with Roman Catholics in Ireland, I have often asked them what they thought of the general conduct of those of their persuasion? And they have been compelled to confess that it was all wrong, drunkenness, profane and false swearing, dishonesty, and debauchery of all kinds, are fatally prevalent among them every where. And for all this, they do not forfeit the character of *good Catholics*; nay, they have the credit of uncommon attachment and fidelity to the principles of their religion. Are all these indisputable facts, or not? If they be not, let them be disproved; and if they be, let the advocates for the Roman Church confess, that, whatever other characters she may possess, she is far from being distinguished by *Sanctity*.

account of the deliverance of the children of Israel from Egypt, and their victorious entrance into the land of Canaan. "Ay," he would say, "I too was once a wretched slave to sin, but divine grace hath set me free; and though I am now passing through the wilderness of this world, the time is at hand when my God shall put me into possession of the heavenly Canaan!" In consequence of his acquaintance with the epistle to the Hebrews, he was enabled to see into the design of many of those rites which God directed the Hebrews to observe; and he found much satisfaction in seeing that Christ was preached, so long before his appearing, in a variety of ceremonies instituted for that purpose. The book of Psalms was a rich mine of spiritual treasure to him; and let his situation or his feelings be what they might, he seldom opened that part of the sacred volume, but he found something in it suited to his case. He found also great delight in reading the Prophecies of Isaiah. In short, Andrew perceived that delightful correspondence between the Old and New Testament, which plainly proved that both were dictated by the same spirit; and he rejoiced exceedingly in his new acquisition.

CHAPTER IV.

The introduction of worship into Andrew's family. Their escape from fire. An account of James Nowlan's wicked design against Andrew, and the happy issue of that matter.

ANDREW was for some time convinced that it was his duty, as head of a Christian family, to introduce family-worship into his house; he saw, very plainly, that nothing could justify the wilful and unnecessary omission of such a practice; and that, if there were no other evidence of the irreligion of his neighbours, their total neglect of family worship would itself go far towards proving it. Since Andrew became acquainted with the word of God, he spent a part of every day in secret prayer: he had thrown his *beads* and *charms* of all kinds "to the moles and to the bats;" and prayed simply from a sense of his wants, and a desire to be blest. But though he could do this when alone, he was afraid he would be unable to do so in the presence of his family; he had no forms of prayer

for a family, nor did he know where to get them, or whether they were to be had; so that he was much disturbed in his mind, between the sense of his own deficiency, and the desire of doing what he considered an important duty. One day he took courage, and thus addressed his family: "My dear wife and children, through the divine mercy, most of us have been brought to an acquaintance with the truth; it is not enough, however, that we glorify God as individuals, we must endeavour to do so as a family. Now one mark of distinction between such families as have the fear of God, and such as have not, seems to be, that the former have *family worship*. I have for some time been hesitating about beginning it, on account of my own deficiency, but I now see that this excuse was occasioned chiefly by *pride*, and I am determined, by the grace of God, no longer to delay what I am convinced it is my duty to do; this night let us begin. They all consented, and, after supper was over, Andrew opened his Testament, and read the third chapter of the Gospel by St. John, a chapter which he was particularly fond of. He ventured to make a few short remarks as he proceeded, and, when that was done, he kneeled down with his family around him, and prayed. He prayed out of the abundance of his heart; he expressed his thankfulness to God for food and raiment, and a house to live in, while many others were destitute of some or all of these; but he particularly praised God, for his great love, in sending his Son into the world to save sinners, and for giving him, and the greatest part of his family, to taste the riches of his grace, while so many on every side of them were in total ignorance. He offered up earnest petitions for all his friends, and for all his enemies, if he had any; nor did he forget Father Dominick. No! he besought God in his behalf, and in behalf of all his flock, and prayed heartily that all the blessings of the gospel might descend upon him and them. He prayed for the good of the land in which he lived, and for the increase of true religion every where; and concluded, by committing himself and all his concerns into the hands of Him who 'never slumbers or sleeps.' "

That night, Andrew had an opportunity of observing the kindness of God in the preservation of those who put their trust in him. He thought he perceived some

smoke in the house; and, upon examination, found that some fire had got into a heap of straw that lay in a corner, and that the straw had nearly taken fire. Andrew quietly stopped the progress of the mischief and uttering an ejaculation of grateful acknowledgment to the Author of all good, for his kind interference, returned to his bed, and said nothing of the incident to any of his family till the morning. When the family was assembled, according to his desire, in the morning, he told them what had happened, pointing out to them the danger to which they had been exposed; hence he took an opportunity of extolling the goodness of that God which had watched over him and his family, and, by a providential interference, had prevented the mischief which threatened him. Not long before, Andrew would have considered all this as the effect of *accident*; but now he saw the hand of God in every thing, and acknowledged his care with thankfulness.

As Andrew was going that morning to his accustomed labour, he saw a strong healthy young man, a son of one of his acquaintances, lying on the grass, apparently not knowing what to do with himself.—“Well, Tom,” said he, “what’s the matter, that you’re not at work this fine day? Are you sick?” “Not I,” answered he, “I never was better; but don’t you know, this is *Lady-day*?” “And what then?” said Andrew. “What then?” replied he, smartly, “why I would sooner cut off my right hand than work on such a day.”—“Pray,” said Andrew, “did I not see you last spring planting potatoes, with some others, on a Sunday morning?” “I don’t doubt but you might; for Father Dominick gave me leave.” “To which do you think,” continued Andrew, “that more respect is due: to God, or to the Virgin Mary?” “To God, I suppose,” answered he. “And what’s the reason then,” said Andrew, “that you would not scruple to work on the *Lord’s day*, and that you are so particular about *Lady-days*?” “I can’t tell, I obey Father Dominick’s orders.” “Alas! for poor Father Dominick!” cried Andrew, “How many deluded souls has he to answer for!” “That’s nothing to me,” said he; “I obey my Clergy, and if they bid me do wrong, they are to blame, and not I.” That *they* are to blame, is certain,” replied Andrew; “but you mistake if you think that will excuse *you*. No,

Tom, each of you must bear his own burden: and Christ says, if the blind lead the blind, *both* shall fall into the ditch." "Mind your own business," cried he, "and don't trouble your head about me. I believe that Father Dominick, who can speak *Latin*, knows these things better than you." So saying, he walked away with an air of triumph. "Poor young man," said Andrew to himself, "the day will come, when you will know the truth of what I have said. I pray God, it may be before it is too late."

When Father Dominick excommunicated Andrew and his family, he talked a good deal about heresy, and insinuated, pretty plainly, that to hurt a heretic, was an offence of no great magnitude; indeed, if I am rightly informed, he represented such an act as somewhat meritorious. Now, it happened, that there was in the congregation, one *James Nowlan*, who owed Andrew a grudge, on account of a preference of a piece of ground which he held, and who would have had no objection, if a favourable opportunity occurred, to make him pay dearly for his advantage. Nowlan, upon hearing Andrew pronounced a heretic, and roundly cursed by the priest, said within himself, "Now is my time to take my revenge upon Andrew Dunn. Father Dominick says, that a heretic ought to be considered as a heathen man and a publican, that is, I suppose, like the Devil himself; that if he was in Spain or Portugal, he would be burned to death, as an enemy to the Church, but that in this country, it is contrary to law, plague on such laws! to burn heretics. Now, if Andrew Dunn deserves to be burned, and that nothing hinders it but *bad laws*, there can be no harm, but a great deal of good, in my giving Andrew Dunn a sound flogging, that he will remember as long as he lives, ay, and longer too; this will be doing God service, and the more so, as I run the chance myself of suffering by the *cruelty* of those laws that will not allow good men to punish wicked heretics as they deserve. This is all true, and I'll show the dog that it is."* Having settled the whole matter in his mind, he determi-

* We discover in James Nowlan the true bigot. He has great zeal for the Church, but breaks the laws of God without scruple. Were I to have inserted all the profane language made use of by this *pious* champion of the Church, on this occasion, I should have presented my readers (my religious readers at least) with a soliloquy which would have

ned, that, on the following night, he would go up to Andrew Dunn's and inflict upon him the punishment which he had merited by his unnatural behaviour to his Mother Church. Accordingly, at the time appointed, he set out from his own house; and, having crossed the fields, he reached the door of Andrew's house, about eight o'clock, just as he had done reading his chapter, and had gone upon his knees with his family, to thank God for the blessings of the day, and to implore a continuance of his favour. He stopped at the door for a minute, to discover what was saying or doing within: when suddenly he heard the sound of a voice which was familiar to him. He knew it to be the voice of Andrew, but it was not like one man conversing with another, nor like a man giving orders, nor in short like any thing he had ever heard. After listening for a little while, and looking through a crevice in the door, he perceived, to his great surprise, that it was Andrew in the act of praying, with his family around him. Curiosity made him listen to what he was saying, and he quite forgot the purpose of his coming, in his astonishment at seeing the devotion of the man and his family, and the manner in which he prayed, so different from any thing that had ever before come under his observation. He heard him thank God for all the blessings he enjoyed, but particularly for what he had done, in redeeming him and his family from sin and death: but what affected him most was his prayers for his enemies. "O Lord," said he, "if we have any enemies in the world, forgive them, whatever unkind thoughts or designs they may have towards us: bless them with the knowledge of thy salvation; and enable us, on every occasion, to return them good for evil!" In this strain he continued to pray for some time, during which James Nowlan was quite overcome with astonishment; and when his prayer was over, he thought he could cordially embrace the man whom he had intended to injure. From what Father Dominick had said, he supposed that Andrew Dunn had sold himself to work iniquity, and had quite thrown off all religion; how great then must have been his surprise, to find him en-

almost made their hair stand on end. Cursing and swearing are so common among the people, that no impression of horror is felt, when the most blasphemous language is employed in the common intercourse of man with man.

gaged in this way! "What," said he to himself, "is this man a heretic? If he be, where are the Christians? Not in Father Dominick's congregation, I am sure. If all that call themselves Christians, ay, and Father Dominick himself, were like poor Andrew here, it would be a different sort of world from what it is." All his purposes of hostility against Andrew were at once laid aside, and he began to blame himself severely for having formed a design to hurt him. "Hurt him," said he, "God forbid! No; let my right hand forget to work, rather than I should employ it to injure such a man."

He was going away; but he recollected himself a little, and determined that he would go in, and tell Andrew what he intended to do, and ask his pardon. He accordingly knocked at the door, and being admitted by the unsuspecting family, Andrew asked him as an acquaintance, how he was, and invited him cordially to sit down by his little fire. "Did you hear," said James Nowlan, "that Father Dominick cursed you and your family last Sunday in the Chapel?" "I did," replied Andrew, "and I heartily pity and pray for the poor mistaken man." "But are you not," said Nowlan, "afraid of the priest's curses?" "Not a bit," answered he, "while I know that God blesses me;" "Do you know, Andrew, that I came here to-night with an intention of punishing you as a heretic, and at the same time of revenging our old quarrel about the ground?" "As to heresy," said Andrew, "he is the only heretic who departs from the word of God; and I am willing to take the consequence of keeping to *that word* against all the priests in the world. And as to the quarrel about the ground, you know, James, that there was nothing either unfair or unfriendly in my conduct about it; but if you think so, I am willing now to give up the ground, and what little improvements I have made upon it, if you have the landlord's consent; for, though I have a family to provide for, I would rather give up all that I have, and trust in the Lord for support, than that any man should have a cause of complaint against me." "God forbid," cried James, viewing the man with a kind of veneration, "that I should take your ground! No, Andrew, you got it fairly; keep it; and all I ask is, that you will forgive me my evil designs against you, and count me as your friend." "I heartily forgive you," re-

plied Andrew, "and I pray God to convince you of your state, as he has convinced me of mine, and to turn you, by his grace, to himself." Though James did not well understand the meaning of the wish, yet from a conviction that it contained something that was good in itself, and needed by him, he felt himself strongly disposed to join in a hearty *Amen!* For he was wonderfully affected by all he saw and heard. He now told Andrew what it was that occasioned the change in his resolution, and asked him, whether it was usual for him to pray with his family in the way he had seen him. Being answered in the affirmative, he begged leave to come over sometimes, and join them, (for their houses were only a quarter of a mile distant from each other.) "By all means," said he, "if you are not offended by my awkwardness." "No indeed," answered he, with much warmth, "I never was affected in all my life by any prayer, till I heard your's just now. As to Father Dominick, I do not know any thing about what he is saying: his prayers are all in Latin, and are too learned for such people as I: and if it was not to have to say that I was at mass, I might as well, I think, spend the time at home. I never could, for the life of me, find out why the prayers of the chapel are said in a strange tongue. Is not plain English as good a language to pray in as any other? And then people will understand what they are saying." "What you say is all right, James; we have been long enough in ignorance; it is high time for us to begin to think for ourselves." He then informed him, that about the same hour, every evening, he would find them, with divine permission, engaged in the same way in which he had then found them; and assured him, that they would all be glad to see him, and that if he would come a little sooner, he might partake with them in their little supper. James thanked him, and took his leave for that night. On his way home he could not help musing on the transactions of the evening. "I came out," said he to himself, "with a determination of giving Andrew Dunn a sound beating—nor did I much care, if I killed him outright; and here am I now going back, not only without having touched a hair of his head, but full of admiration at the man, and reproaching myself in my own mind for having formed the design of hurting him. How this will end, I don't know; but I feel myself, at

this moment, more disposed to side with Andrew than with Father Dominick. I now remember, though I took but little notice of it at the time, that Father Dominick seemed to be in a great passion at the chapel, when he spoke of Andrew; but Andrew is all mildness and composure! To judge by appearances, there is more of the Christian in the temper and carriage of Andrew, than of Father Dominick." By this time, he had reached home, and went quickly to bed, but not, as usual, to sleep! No! his thoughts scarcely ever wandered from the occurrences of the evening: his own wicked design—Andrew's prayer—his meekness—his steadiness!—He slept but little during the night; and while he was at work on the following day, his mind still ran upon the same subject. In the evening he went to Andrew's, and joined with him and his family at worship. Andrew was led particularly to pray for his guest, that God would be pleased to enlighten his mind, and lead him into all truth. After prayer, they got into conversation upon the subject of religion, and they were both so much interested, that they did not observe how the time passed, and it was near twelve o'clock before they could prevail on themselves to separate. The particulars of the conversation do not appear; but it is well known that the matters debated were more important than "whether this or that church be the true one." It turned a good deal upon the question: "What must a poor sinner, convinced that he deserves the wrath of God, and that his heart is wicked, do to be saved?" Andrew showed James very plainly from Scripture, that all the penances he could perform, and all the mortifications he could submit to, and all the prayers he could say as long as he lived, could not restore him to the favour of God; that the Word of God shows the only way by which it can be effected, viz. the atoning virtue of CHRIST's offering, applied by faith to the soul. He showed him also, how the love of Christ constrains the believer to devote himself to his service, so that he no longer continues in sin, but must hate it, and resist and overcome it. These were the subjects chiefly insisted upon that night: and it pleased God to open the heart of James, to receive the important truths which he heard; so that Andrew had the satisfaction, in a little time, of seeing him possessed of a good hope in Christ, and giving proof of this to the world, by forsaking his sins.

This James Nowlan had been a great bully; he used to go to all the fairs and hurling matches, and pick quarrels there, to *make sport*, or, in other words, to set people by the ears, that they might cut and hack one another without mercy. He was a man of great strength, and used to carry a huge cudgel, or *shilelah*, which was well known round the country by the name of *Jemmy's switch*; with this formidable weapon he has knocked down many an enemy, and few could see it without trembling. But this lion-like man, whom every one feared, was changed by the influence of true religion into the very opposite character! and he became a striking instance of the truth of that saying, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." The very expression of his countenance was altered: for, before, his aspect was ferocious, and strongly marked the savage disposition that was within. But after he became possessed of genuine religion, his features wore a complacent kind of smile, which indicated the composure and serenity of his soul. He brought his great stick, one evening, to Andrew's house, and told them that he was come formally to commit to the flames the instrument with which he had so often done the work of the Devil. "This is the very weapon," said he, "with which I intended to have beat you, the night I came here for that purpose; and there can be no better place for me to burn it in than this." So saying, he threw it into the fire, and as it burned he said, "Blessed Redeemer! these hands have been too often employed as they should not, in seeking mischief; and these eyes have too often looked with satisfaction upon scenes from which they should have turned with horror. But thy grace has taught me to hate my former wickedness. I desire now to see no blood but the blood of thy cross, by which my soul is redeemed; and while I look by faith on that object, may I die unto sin, and devote my powers to thy blessed service!" Andrew's heart danced for joy, and he could not help crying out, "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit rejoiceth in my God, my Saviour!"

CHAPTER V.

James Nowlan's family becomes religious. Others join Andrew. Account of a man taken with a fever.--Father Dominick's death. James Nowlan's happy departure.

JAMES NOWLAN, having himself found "the pearl of

great price," was anxious that his family should be possessed of an interest in the blessing. Accordingly he begged that they would accompany him, at the usual hour, to Andrew's house. They all of them showed a great deal of reluctance, and for some days absolutely refused. "A pretty thing indeed," said they, "to go and pray with such a fellow, when Father Dominick told us, that the devil himself was not a worse companion." They could not, however, help observing the change which had taken place in James. He was no longer quarrelsome and drunken as he used to be, but stayed at home, and endeavoured to make his family happy. They could not deny that Andrew Dunn (for they did not know then that it was the work of God) had accomplished, in a few weeks, what Father Dominick had not been able to effect, by all his preachings, and *penances* and *holy sprinklings*, in twenty years. They could not account for this; and they certainly felt a curiosity to go to his house, though they were for some time restrained by superstitious fears. At last, they took courage, and determined to go. Andrew's prayer was simple and affecting, and there was not a dry eye in the little congregation. When they went home they concurred in praising Andrew: and the next night they needed no entreaties to persuade them to go, but when the time came, all offered of themselves, and some of them were even waiting for the expected hour with impatience. Without entering into farther particulars, I shall just mention, that James Nowlan's family soon began to feel the power of true religion, and showed the change, by turning from their sins, and leading a new life; this, of course, was matter of much encouragement and thankfulness to Andrew. He had now the satisfaction, also, of seeing his eldest daughter, upon the fullest conviction, renounce her errors, and embrace the truth; so that 's little family was at perfect unity with itself. On Sundays, they and James Nowlan's family used to meet regularly twice for worship, and their meetings were conducted on the following plan.* Andrew,

* Some may think that Andrew is taking upon himself the office of the ministry; but this is not the case. Andrew, in calling together his family, and endeavouring to explain the word of God to them, did not more than what the head of any christian family should endeavour to do. And if some of the neighbours chose to join him, he could not, consist-

after a short prayer for a blessing upon what they were engaged in, would either himself read, or make his son read a chapter in the Bible; and when it was read he would endeavour to call their attention to the principal matters contained in it, and apply them for the strengthening of their faith, and improvement of their lives. When that was over, they had a second prayer, after which they concluded. For some time, these two families alone dared to be singular; to turn from their sins, and to worship God, in a spiritual way, setting aside the idle forms and unmeaning ceremonies in which they had been educated. Others were afraid on account of Father Dominick's curse, to join them; and they were exposed to much ridicule and opposition on account of their adherence to the Scripture. However, after the first impressions, occasioned by the priest's denunciations, had a little worn away, some began to reflect upon the great change which had taken place in the lives both of Andrew Dunn and James Nowlan, and particularly the latter. They could not help observing too, the order of their families, their kind and gracious manner one to another, so different from what they saw in other families; they were struck also with the improvement in their outward circumstances. They supposed, from what Father Dominick had said, that God would, by some signal providence, (such as destroying his house, or blasting his crop,) show his displeasure against Andrew, on account of his heresy. But instead of that, Andrew was thriving in his worldly circumstances, more than any of his neighbours in his own line of life. Nor was this to be wondered at.—True religion proved to him the source of temporal profit, as well as of eternal benefit; for his wife and children now became as active and industrious as they were

ently with his duty, refuse to admit them. Andrew knew that Father Dominick was himself in error, and was leading the people astray; he could not, therefore, send the people to *him* for instruction, and he did not at that time know of any Christian minister in the neighbourhood. In these circumstances, Andrew appears to have taken the wisest step he could have taken, in simply endeavouring to direct the people to read their Bibles, and pray for divine light to understand them. I believe I may answer for Andrew, that he is looking about him to find out among what denomination of Christians he can discover most of the true spirit of the Gospel; and that it is his intention openly to unite with them, and to recommend to his little circle of friends to follow his example. As the friend of honest Andrew, let me entreat the candid reader not hastily to judge, nor rashly to condemn him.

before lazy and idle; and the time which was before spent in doing nothing, or in diversion, was now devoted to some useful occupation. They bought wheels, and spun flax, which brought them in a reasonable profit; so that Andrew's cabin began to exhibit an interesting scene; while he was employed at the Squire's, and his son engaged in the cultivation of their little farm, his wife and daughters were to be seen cheerfully working at their wheels. Many, from seeing these things, were induced to think more favourably of Andrew than they did at first; and, after a while, some took courage, and ventured to come on a Sunday morning, to attend the little religious meetings at his house; while others, curious to know the nature of these meetings, and afraid to enter the doors of one denounced by the priest, would listen outside at the windows, and thus they were emboldened by degrees, to break through the restraint by which they were held. As Andrew made it his business simply to follow the Scriptures, and to direct those who attended at his house, to take no other guide, he had the satisfaction, after a little time, of seeing that his feeble efforts to point out the nature of true religion, as contained in the sacred volume, were not in vain. He took particular pains to convince them, that he did not attempt to introduce any thing new, but simply to show them what the Word of God contained; and that it was their business to forget what they had learned from men, and to read that word, as if they had learned nothing before; and, that if they did, they would find that it contained every thing that was necessary to be known for the salvation of their souls.

About this time, Andrew got what he considered a very valuable present, from a religious character in the neighbourhood; this was "Dr. Watt's Psalms and Hymns." The same person, also, taught Andrew a few plain tunes, with which he was much pleased; and he began, from this time, to add the singing of Psalms and Hymns to the other parts of worship, in which, after a short time, he was joined by the rest. This he found to be agreeable to the directions given by the Apostle Paul, in the following words, "Speaking to yourselves in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your hearts unto the Lord." Ephesians v, 19. Now take notice, that a few years ago, Andrew and his family used to be at all the wakes in the country,

and were among the foremost in singing *bad songs*; which was not singing, as the apostle says, "with *grace* in their hearts to the Lord," but "singing with *sin* in their hearts to the devil." They now saw the damnable nature of these things; and while they remembered what they had been, tears of gratitude and joy would flow down their cheeks; at the thoughts of what they were now rescued from, by the distinguishing goodness of God.

It was mentioned at the beginning of this narrative, that the Squire's Lady had distributed Testaments, among the poor of her neighbourhood. The truth is, that though the people had received her gifts out of respect to her, the *books* had been neglected by most of those who received them, till this time. It pleased God, however, by means of the simple persuasion of Andrew, to rouse the people from their indifference, and to incline many to read his blessed Word. And it appears, that about a dozen families, all at once, began to feel a concern about everlasting things, and to read the Word of God, to know, if matters were as Andrew stated them. The Testaments, which before were despised, and lay in a corner of the cabin, were now brought into use. They were at first surprised, and soon after convinced; their prejudices fell before the blessed truth of God; and Andrew had delightful employment on his hands, in answering the inquiries of some, encouraging the hearts of others, and uniting with some in praising the name of that REDEEMER, who had called them out of darkness into the marvelous light of the Gospel. "How wonderful are the ways of God," he would say, "to employ such a worm as I am in such a glorious work!" But, upon remembering that passage, in 1 Cor. i. chap. and 27th verse, "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and God hath chosen the weak things to confound the things that are mighty;" he would say, "Ay on this plan, God has all the glory; be it so: to the Lord be everlasting honour and praise." Andrew's cabin was now filled twice every Sunday; and though the worship held there had nothing splendid in outward show to recommend it, yet it was such as God had declared his respect to, "a worship in spirit and in truth;" and those who met there, found, by blessed experience, that God is as little a respecter of places, as of persons. When the morning worship was over, they made a little

collection out of their savings during the week, according to the apostle's direction: "Upon the first day of the week, let every one of you lay by him in store, according as God hath prospered him." 1 Cor. xvi, 2. Andrew Dunn and James Nowlan were chosen as the persons to manage that little fund, which they did most faithfully, putting down in a book every thing that was received, and every thing that was laid out. As every one was willing to contribute as far as he was able, they could do a great deal of good in the neighbourhood. They had upon their list six old men, who were past their labour, and each of them received out of the funds six pence half-penny every week; they were particularly attentive to the sick, and used to visit them, and buy whatever was necessary for them. Thus "their light shone before men," and they proved to the world, that their religion was not in words, nor in show, but in *faith*, which *worketh by love*.

I shall mention a little incident which took place at this time. There was a poor man passing through that country, who on his journey was seized with a fever. As soon as the people at whose house he lodged knew that he had this complaint, they were determined that they would put him out of the house. Andrew got tidings of the circumstance, and instantly set out for the place where the sick man was, (which was about half a mile from his own house,) and his son with him. He found the family preparing to put him out; and after showing them the cruelty of such a step, he and his son put the sick man upon a door, and covering him up as well as they could, they carried him to their own home, where, with the consent of all the family, he was lodged and taken care of in the best way they were able. Andrew's wife was his nurse, and paid him as much attention as if he had been her own brother. Nor were they satisfied with merely administering to his bodily wants. Andrew would take his Bible and read to him, and would often kneel down by his bed-side, and pray with him. The man was after some weeks' confinement, restored, by the blessing of God, to health. As he recovered, he used to muse upon his situation, and did not know what to make of the extraordinary attention paid him. "Surely," he would say, "if there are any real Christians upon the earth, they are in this family; they took

me in, when I was diseased and destitute, and; at the risk of their own lives, they have taken care of mine. Had I been a brother, or a son, I could not have been more affectionately attended to." Andrew, seeing him so favourably disposed to him and his family, made use of this circumstance to recommend the truth to him, and, by the blessing of God, his endeavours were not in vain. This man was brought to the knowledge of the truth in Andrew's house; and when he went to his own house, he became as zealous, and almost as successful a champion for it, in his neighbourhood, as Andrew was in his.

About this time, Andrew got an account that Father Dominick was dying. He had been struck by the palsy, and his state was such, that a second stroke was every hour expected, which, it was supposed, would put an end to his life. Andrew, after many struggles, resolved that he would go and see him. Accordingly he went to his house, and knocked at the door. When it was known who it was that was there, the people informed the dying man of it; supposing that Andrew was come to ask forgiveness of Father Dominick before he died. Andrew was admitted, and was much shocked to see the state in which Father Dominick was. When he saw Andrew, he cried out, "Oh, Andrew! I am a dying man, but that is not the worst of it; I am afraid my soul is lost for ever!" "Say not so, Sir," answered Andrew, with much emotion, "while the Word of God says, *that the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin.*" "Oh, Andrew! had I attended to your faithful reproof on the day when we talked together at your cabin, I might have done well. You told me, that the care of souls was an awful charge; I now feel it to be so; I have a dreadful account to give in at the bar of God for the loss of souls ruined by my neglect or ignorance. Oh! it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God!" His voice faltered, as he uttered these words, and the second attack of his complaint came on, which immediately deprived him of all sensibility, and in a few hours of life itself.

Andrew hastened away from a place where he could be of no use, and from a scene too painful for his feelings. As he went home, he wept bitterly, when he reflected upon the awful infatuation of those who put off the preparation for eternity until the last sickness comes! He blessed God in his soul, that he had made him a

monument of his mercy; and his mind was divided between sorrow for the case of poor Father Dominick, and gratitude for the blessed state into which God, in his rich mercy, had brought himself.

I shall conclude my narrative with an account of the happy departure of James Nowlan, which did not, however, happen for two years after this time. One evening, as Andrew was sitting with his family, an account was brought him, that James Nowlan was very ill, and wished to see him. He obeyed the summons without the least delay, and upon entering his sick friend's house, was addressed by him as follows: "Andrew, I feel myself very ill, but my soul is full of comfort. I do not know whether this sickness is unto death, but my Redeemer knows, and that's enough for me. For some time past I have desired to live only to his glory, and if he is more glorified by my death than by my life, I would choose rather to die than to live." Andrew was much rejoiced to find his friend in such a happy state of mind; and heartily joined with him in the praises of redeeming love. "Oh! how precious to my heart," cried James, "are the comfortable promises of the Gospel! How sweetly does the name of Jesus sound in my ears!" In this strain he went on for some time. Andrew would not interrupt him; but, when he stopped, he proposed that they should pray together, and that a portion of God's word should be read. "Oh, yes!" said James, let me hear the voice of my REDEEMER; it is he who speaks; my soul is all attention." Andrew took up the Bible, and read the fifteenth chapter of the first Epistle to the Corinthians, and then kneeled down by the side of the bed, and poured out his soul in fervent thankfulness to God for what he had done for his friend, and in prayers for a continuance of his supporting grace. He then returned home, but, early in the morning, he went again to James's house. He found him weaker in body, but strong in spirit. His complaint was a pleurisy; they got him bled: but it was evident that he was growing worse, and both he and all about him were now convinced that he was going to be removed to a habitation in the heavens. A few hours before his departure he sent for Andrew: and when he was come, and the family collected round his bed, he broke out in a kind of transport, taking up the concluding verses of the chapter which had been read the night before. "O death!" said he, "where is thy

sting? O grave! where is thy victory? Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Cor. xv, 55, 57. "Yes," continued he, "my Saviour in his death overcame the last enemy, and he allows me to gather up the spoils." Upon seeing his family weeping, he would say, "Weep not for me, my dear wife and children; but rejoice with me, and help me to praise the Redeemer's name. I am going where I shall see him as he is, and be for ever with him; Oh! the exceeding and eternal weight of glory, of which my ransomed soul will be a partaker!" No one had power, or indeed inclination, to say a word; all were lost in wonder at the excellency of divine grace, which could make a poor worm rejoice even in death, and divest so formidable an enemy of his power to hurt. "Do not imagine," he would sometimes say, "that death appears to me a light thing; far from it. I see it to be a very awful event: but while I am able to look at CHRIST by faith, I have nothing to fear from death, and every thing to expect from a removal out of this world to that blessed state which is purchased and provided for me beyond the grave." His bodily strength grew weaker and weaker; but his soul enjoyed the most triumphant views of happiness, of which he would give occasional assurance to his surrounding friends. After remaining silent for some time, he cried out, with more strength than it was thought he was capable of exerting, "Hallelujah! blessing, and honour, and glory, be unto the Lamb for ever! These were the last words he spoke: but the heavenly smile upon his countenance showed to all around what was the state of his mind; and the expressive manner in which he would lift up his eyes and hands to heaven, when he could no longer speak, were sufficient indications that his mental faculties were still in exercise, and that his triumph over death was complete. In a few hours his happy spirit was translated to the paradise of God. "May we die the death of the righteous, and may our last end be like his!" Numbers, xxiii, 10.

Precious Bible! what a treasure
Does the word of God afford;
All I want for life or pleasure,
Food and Med'cine, Shield and Sword;
Let the world account me poor,
Having this, I need no more.

THE END.